REMARKS:

In the outstanding Office Action, claims 1-15 were rejected. New claim 16 has been added. Thus, claims 1-16 are pending and under consideration. No new matter has been added. The rejections are traversed below.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(a):

In the outstanding Office Action, claims 1-6, 8 and 10-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,832,451 ('451) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,324,650 ('650). Claims 7 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over '451 in view of '650 and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,831,526 ('526).

'451 discusses an automated travel service management information system for providing an entire portion of a customer's profile information to a travel agent when a travel request is received from the customer.

'650 discusses a message content protection system that discloses information at the occurrence of predefined disclosure conditions.

'526 discusses a computerized insurance quote request for producing a document tailored to an individual client and the risk associated with the client by allowing the client to choose from types of transactions.

The present invention discloses is directed to secure intermediation control between a user and a service provider by providing a permitted range of personal information of a user to the service provider based on a request by the user.

The Examiner maintains the comparison of the '451 retrieval of traveler's information for providing the same to a travel agent with the *selective* extraction of a user's personal information in the present invention. In '451, business and individual profile information as well as available customer reservation information is provided to a travel agent when a travel request is received from a customer (see, column 19, lines 2-15 of '451). This means that upon a travel request, the '451 system makes available *the entire* business and/or individual profile information of the customer to the travel agent whether the provided information was necessary for the travel reservation or not (see, column 7, lines 16-22 of '451).

The Examiner acknowledges that the '451 system does not teach determining a range of permitted personal information of a user based on a kind of commodity request information sent from the user, thus relies on '650 as teaching the same. In '650, a user (or an information

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provider) enters sensitive information into a computer network to disclose the same in a desired way if certain conditions are detected (see, column 6, lines 48-52 of '650). In addition to providing the sensitive information, the user provides or ratifies instructions for the possible disclosure and/or deletion of that information (see, column 7, lines 7-9 of '650). Based on the predefined instructions for disclosure and/or deletion of the information, some or all of the sensitive information is disclosed or deleted in formats predefined by the user (see, column 8, lines 1-5 and column 10, lines 12-15 of '650). This means that the '650 system is directed to a system for disclosing protected information upon an occurrence of a user (information provider) predefined condition.

The combination of the '451 and '650 systems results in a system for providing an entire portion of a customer's profile information to a travel agent when a travel request is received from the customer, where a message content protection is provided for only disclosing information at the occurrence of predefined disclosure conditions.

In contrast, the present invention includes "determining a range of permitted personal information of a user, for disclosure, based on a kind of commodity request information sent from said user" (see, independent claims 1, 10, 11 and 13 of the present application). The extracted "range of personal information and contents of a request" are made available to a service provider (see, independent claims 1, 10, 11 and 13 of the present application). This allows the present invention to selectively disclose only necessary information by determining a range of permitted personal information "based on a find of commodity request information sent from said user" and making the same available to a service provider, thereby enabling a secure control over personal information of the user. The combination of the '451 and the '650 systems do not teach or suggest, "determining a range of permitted personal information of a user, for disclosure, based on a kind of commodity request information sent from said user" and making the extracted range of personal information available to a service provider. Instead, the '451 system is directed to making an entire personal information of a customer available to an agent, and the '650 system is directed to having the user predefine conditions for disclosing information.

Independent claims 8, 14 and 15 recite, "receiving disclosure information as a portion of request commodity information received from a user" and "transmitting commodity information created based on the disclosure information as response information". The combination of the '451 and the '650 systems do not teach or suggest "receiving disclosure information as a portion of request commodity information received from a user" because the '451 system is directed to

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providing an entire personal information to an agent and the '650 system is limited to disclosing sensitive information upon occurrence of the user's predefined condition.

Independent claim 12 recites an intermediation control method including, "generating a look-up table having information ... correlated with items of disclosure" for extracting a range of information of a user "based on a request sent by the user and the correlation" and providing the extracted range of information to a service provider. The combination of the '451 and the '650 systems do not teach or suggest "generating a look-up table having information ... correlated with items of disclosure" because the '451 system is directed to providing an entire personal information to an agent, and the '650 system is limited to disclosing sensitive information according to *user defined* conditions, thereby requiring the user to manually define conditions for disclosure.

The Examiner acknowledges that the '451 and '650 systems do not teach or suggest a disclosure information-receiving means as a portion of a request of an estimate of insurance, thus relies on '526 as teaching the same. In '526, an insurance agent is able to enter only certain minimal information of a client for purposes of quoting an insurance premium (see, column 3, lines 29-33 of '526). This means that based on the insurance agent's determination of what is needed for the insurance premium, minimal information of the client is entered. Thus, the '526 system does not teach or suggest an apparatus that extracts "range of personal information... for disclosure based on an estimate request of an insurance and a type of said insurance" that is "a portion of" the request of an estimate of the insurance (see, claims 7 and 9).

It is submitted that the independent claims are patentable over the combination of '451, '650 and/or '526.

For at least the above-mentioned reasons, claims depending from independent claims 1, 8 and 10-15 are patentably distinguishable over the combination of '451, '650 and/or '526. The dependent claims are also independently patentable. For example, as recited in claims 5 and 6, the intermediation control apparatus includes "a management table for managing correlation between... contents of said request and disclosure information of said personal information" (claim 5) where the intermediation control apparatus "determines said disclosure information based on said management table" (claim 6). The cited references alone or in combination do not teach or suggest "a management table for managing correlation between... contents of said request and disclosure information of said personal information" for disclosing information.

Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

NEW CLAIM:

New claim 16 has been added to emphasize that an intermediation control method of the present invention includes, "automatically determining a range of personal information of a user to be disclosed upon receipt of a request from the user" and "extracting the range of personal information of the user from stored personal information based on the request from the user", where "the extracted range of personal information of the user" is provided to the at least one service provider. Accordingly, a secure method of providing personal information of a user is enabled without requiring additional operations for defining what can be disclosed.

It is therefore submitted that new claim 16 is patentably distinguishable over the cited references.

CONCLUSION:

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.
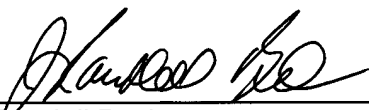
Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

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